

# An effective data culture: Engage with middle management

## Introduction

Advanced Analytics presents huge opportunities for business if they know how to understand, drive decisions with it and share it effectively within the organization.

This is about Culture.

In a recent survey we conducted of over 2000 UK business leaders, the average response (on a scale from 0 - 10, 0 being completely disagree, 10 being completely agree) to "I frequently stage effective discussion between analytics and business skill sets" was a 4.65. Leaders aren't focused on effectively connecting analytics with business, and this needs to change.

We have spoken to over 600 leaders and experienced first-hand the challenges that organizations face in their efforts to truly realize the business value of Big Data.

The crucial step to driving positive business outcomes lies in the final stage of our data maturity model: data culture.

Simply put, this is the ability of teams to connect business experience with advanced analytic skills by asking better questions. This culture and way of working must then be scaled throughout the entire organization using a simple and shared language. This enables business units to start breaking down data silos, allowing other business leaders to discover insights from teammates while up against the business's must-win battles.



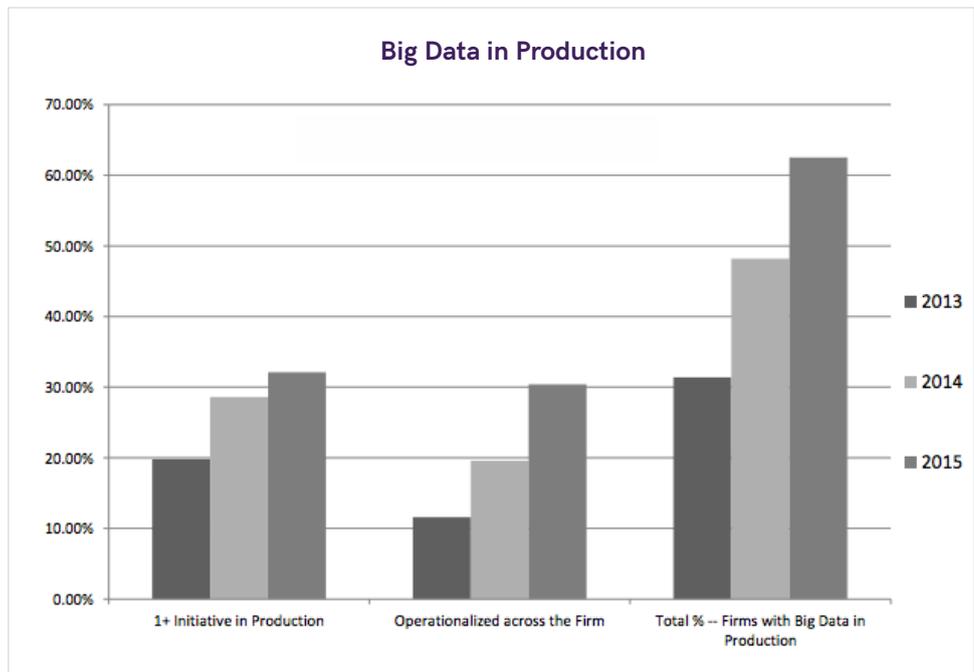
## The journey towards an effective Data Culture

Data maturity should not be a challenge that Chief Data Officers face alone, but rather an opportunity for business teams to utilize Big Data to fuel business value in their areas of expertise.

### 1. Establish the right Infrastructure

Data Culture starts with finding the right infrastructure and home for data. This is not a small challenge as organizations are faced with a tsunami of data every day. Data needs to be organized in a secure and well-managed infrastructure so that the front line of the business can gain access quickly when needed.

This starts to build a single source of data that leaders know they can trust and is linked to driving business value.



Dig Data in Production	2013	2014	2015
1+ Initiative in Production	19.8%	28.6%	32.1%
Operationalized across the firm	11.6%	19.6%	30.4%
Total % — Firms with Big Data in Production	31.4%	48.2%	62.5%

## 2. Harness Talent

Organizations need to source the right talent. This is about welcoming a new member of the business team who can master advanced mathematics and statistics, data modeling, data mining, predictive modeling, visualization... the list goes on. But most importantly, finding the right talent to interact with business teams and domain experts - to ask tough questions, to ask "stupid" questions, and to understand how this data is going to be used.

*"I've never heard anyone discuss a data science profile without talking about understanding the business. Again, it's critical to have the person running the analysis fully understand - and be interested in - why this question is being asked, what the business person would do given the results, and why they would make that decision."*

— Bill Franks, Teradata Chief Analytics Officer

## 3. Engage with the business through Projects

To progress along the journey of data culture maturity, like all successful transformations, quick wins and early success will demonstrate value to the business leaders who are going to lead this journey.

"Light fires" with data project success and let the leadership community in the organization share the story.

## 4. Embrace the Middle

Business value is truly accelerated through connectivity within the organization.

In their 2017 Big Data Executive Survey, NewVantage Partners found that the greatest perceived barrier to Big Data adoption is insufficient organizational alignment:

Cultural impediments to Big Data business adoption	
Insufficient organizational alignment	42.6%
Lack of middle management adoption and understanding	41.0%
Business resistance or lack of understanding	41.0%
Lack of a coherent data strategy	29.5%
Technology resistance or lack of understanding	27.9%
Inability to create a shared vision	26.2%
Lack of data governance policies and practices	21.3%

Business leaders must connect data scientists to teams and ask where can we add the most value - the middle management of the organization, and how data can fuel transformation here. Business managers and analytics should work together to achieve clarity of where data can enhance our understanding of business context that fuels better decision making, and iterating through challenges together through a simple and shared language.

The opportunity to derive tangible business value from Big Data can be realized when organizations can achieve this culture at scale.

Align at the top. Invest in the middle.



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## Our Mission

We are inspiring leaders towards a data culture. We are bringing people together to challenge their thinking and drive change. We are working with our clients to build the foundations that enable them to unlock value in analytics.

<https://pelatum.co>

## Want to understand how you can build a data culture inside your organisation?

Contact us: [info@pelatum.co](mailto:info@pelatum.co)